

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A system for efficiently processing customer orders, comprising:

means for receiving customer orders;

5 means for processing customer orders;

means for automatically checking inventory for availability of customer orders;

means for retrieving goods from inventory to create loads;

10 means for efficiently building loads; and

means for efficiently scheduling loads to customers.

2. A system for efficiently purchasing items, comprising:

means for creating blanket vendor orders;

15 means for user input to requisition items;

means for processing requisition requests by comparing said requisition requests against blanket vendor orders for availability of items;

20 means for checking the availability of funds against budget to approve transactions;

means for communicating purchase request and purchase release to vendor; and

means for acknowledging purchase request.

3. The system of claim 2 further comprising:
means for receiving items and creating a record of receipt; and means for creating an accounts payable record initiated by said record of receipt.

5 4. The system of claim 3 further comprising:
means for placing an item in inventory.

5. A method for creating a graphical user interface for a customer service representative to efficiently input orders, comprising:

10 creating screens in a window context with multiple files, said screens having buttons to control access to files; using said buttons to access customer records.

6. A method of managing a logistic system, comprising the steps of:

15 creating a network data base;
downloading customer order data to terminals to create load criteria;
assembling loads based on pre-established criteria;
routing loads based upon predetermined delivery criteria;
20 and
generating data to assemble said loads.

7. A method for tendering loads to carriers for shipment comprising the steps of:

creating a carrier data base with information necessary to determine shipping costs and delivery schedules;

5 tendering an offer of shipment to a selected carrier in a predetermined format; and

receiving confirmation from a carrier.

8. A method for creating an automated warehousing ticket comprising the steps of generating a pick-order;

10 picking items from inventory;

creating a record of the picked items;

transmitting said order information to a central data base in real time;

delivering the picked items to shipping point;

15 transmitting data of delivery of items for shipment to said data base; and

consolidating the pick and shipment information into a record in said data base.

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20 9. A method for creating an electronic catalog comprising the steps of:

requesting vendor quotations;

creating blanket vendor orders;

entering blanket vendor orders in a data base;

creating pre-approved budgets;

25 creating purchase requests;

requesting items from the blanket vendor order data base;
communicating said orders to vendor;
receiving acknowledgment of order requests;
receiving ordered items; and
5 recording receipt of said items.

A handwritten signature, possibly "H. L. B.", with a large, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

SECRET